

VZCZCXYZ0000  
OO RUEHWEB

DE RUEHIL #0208/01 0271105  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
O 271105Z JAN 10  
FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7091  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 0613  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO IMMEDIATE 6256  
RHEHAAA/THE WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
RHMFISS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL//CCPA// IMMEDIATE  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 2273  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 8307  
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 2304  
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI

UNCLAS ISLAMABAD 000208

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [OIIP](#) [OPRC](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PK](#)

SUBJECT: PAKISTAN MEDIA REACTION: JANUARY 27, 2010

Summary: Coverage of regional support for Afghan President Hamid Karzai's reconciliation and reintegration efforts with the Taliban dominated front-pages on Wednesday morning. Along with the report, "Dawn," reported that the "United States and its allies are expected to set up a \$500 million integration fund in London this week" to persuade Taliban fighters to join the political mainstream. All major newspapers reported the Taliban's claim that they shot down another U.S. drone in North Waziristan. Media reported that the government issued a new code of conduct for movement of foreigners, requiring them to obtain permission from "all departments of law enforcement agencies before leaving for prohibited areas." Seven mainstream dailies published the U.S. Mission's correction of a media report, published on 1/26, alleging Pakistani security officials were trained by the company formerly known as Blackwater. "Nawa-i-Waqt" published a story claiming Blackwater officials in Peshawar have shifted to secret locations. "The Pakistan Observer" reported that "differences have emerged between Pakistan and the U.S. over the amount money to be released to Pakistan under the Coalition Support Fund (CRF)." Newspapers also reported that the U.S. has asked Pakistan to stop blocking talks regarding the ban on production of fissile material. Media widely covered U.S. National Security Adviser James Jones' statement seeking greater Pakistan action against extremism and pledging Washington's determination for the long haul. Admiral Mike Mullen's remarks urging India and Pakistan to "avoid public disputes" were also reported. Media also reported that, according to a U.S. Congressionally mandated panel, the U.S. is not prepared for a biological terrorist attack. A Washington Post story that "Al Qaeda still aims to use weapons of mass destruction" was prominently displayed. Talks with the Taliban continued to dominate editorial pages. While India's role in Afghanistan remains a concern for Pakistan (see "Summitry on Afghanistan", "Daily Times"), most editorialists responded positively to this development: "Dialogue With Taliban: A Right Decision In Right Direction" ("Mushriq"); and "Inclusion of Taliban" ("Dawn"). Urdu language daily, "Islam," painted General McChrystal's statement on Taliban inclusion in the Afghan government as an acknowledgement of defeat ("U.S. Army's Concedes Defeat in Afghanistan.") Urdu language dailies "Express" and "Nawa-i-Waqt," and English daily, "The Nation," ran editorials lauding China's "warning" to the U.S. regarding interference in China's internal matters and lecturing on the Kashmir issue: "China's Stance on Kashmir and the Offer of Mediation" ("Express"); "China's Warning To The U.S. And the Prerequisites Of Our Security" ("Nawa-i-Waqt"); and "China Rebuffs U.S." ("The Nation"). End Summary.

TOP STORIES

News Story: Karzai Move To Win Over Taliban Gets Support - "Dawn"  
(01/27)

"Afghan President Hamid Karzai won regional support on Tuesday for his efforts to cajole Taliban to lay down their arms. A joint statement after a meeting among the presidents of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Turkey and officials from China, Iran and Russia declared support for 'the Afghan national process of reconciliation and reintegration... in a way that is Afghan-led and -driven.' After the talks, President Karzai described moderate Taliban as 'sons of the Afghan soil' who should be brought back into the fold."

News Story: U.S., Allies Plan \$500m Fund To Woo Taliban - "Dawn" (01/27)

"The United States and its allies are expected to set up a \$500 million integration fund at a conference in London this week to lure Taliban fighters to join the political mainstream. 'We are going to go to London to affirm our international support for it,' said U.S. Special Envoy Richard Holbrooke. 'Money will be forthcoming for it. I can't say how much. The Japanese are going to take the lead.'"

News Story: Taliban Claim Shooting Down Another Drone - "The News" (01/27)

"The Taliban in North Waziristan on Tuesday claimed to have shot down another US drone in Boya village of Dattakhel Tehsil near the border with Afghanistan but failed to provide any proof in this regard. Senior government officials based in Miramshah, the main town of North Waziristan, confirmed that a U.S. drone had crashed in the border village of Boya, but did not know about the cause of its crash."

News Story: New Code Of Conduct For Movement Of Foreigners Issued - "The News" (01/27)

"The government on Tuesday issued a new code of conduct for movement of foreigners living in Pakistan and they have been asked to take permission from the Defence and Foreign Ministries for security clearance, a private TV channel reported."

News Story: No Staff Trained by Blackwater For Pak Leaders' Security, Says U.S. Embassy - "The News,"

"Business Recorder," "Pakistan Observer," "Jang," "Nawa-i-Waqt," "Ausaf," "Jinnah" (01/27)

"The U.S. Embassy on Tuesday contradicted and termed as 'completely baseless and untrue' a report carried by several daily newspapers on Monday (January 25) that Pakistani security officials trained by the company formerly known as Blackwater have been providing security for Prime Minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani."

News Story: Blackwater Officials Leave Residences In Peshawar, Shift Over To Secret Locations" "Nawa-i-Waqt" (01/27)

"After strong protest from the members of the NWFP Assembly, the Blackwater agents present in Peshawar have left their residences and shifted over to some secret places. In a recent session of the NWFP Assembly, senior provincial minister Bashir Bilour had admitted that these agents were operating in Peshawar while the members of the house had strongly protested over their presence in the city. According to sources, as many as 15 Blackwater operatives are providing security services to the U.S. diplomats of the Peshawar Consulate, and these agents reside in houses situated at Old Bara Road and University Town. But after the protest from the NWFP Assembly members, they have shifted over to undisclosed places."

News Story: CRF Funds - Pak, U.S. Draw Battle Lines - "Pakistan Observer" (01/27)

"Differences have emerged between Pakistan and U.S. over the amount money to be released to Pakistan under Coalition Support Fund (CRF) and on Tuesday the negotiation between the two countries over this matter concluded inconclusively, Finance Ministry sources told Online."

News Story: Pakistan Accused Of Delaying Geneva Nuclear Talks - "Dawn" (01/27)

"Pakistan is delaying international talks on a ban on the production

of new nuclear bomb material, insisting that any deal must also require its archrival India to reduce its existing stockpile. President Barack Obama has pushed for the ban, and the United States on Tuesday urged Pakistan to allow a quick start to the talks at the UN Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. 'It is imperative that we work together ... and begin substantive work in 2010,' U.S. representative Garold N. Larson told the meeting."

News Story: U.S. Success Linked To Pakistan's Cooperation: Obama Aide - "Dawn" (01/27)

"The U.S. success in Afghanistan is directly linked to Pakistan's willingness to cooperate and act against the militants, says a top Obama aide. 'It is beyond question that the speed with which we are able to achieve our goals in Afghanistan has a link to the willingness of Pakistan to take on the fact that safe havens exist in the border region," said U.S. National Security Adviser James Jones."

News Story: U.S. Urges India, Pakistan To Avoid Public Disputes - "Dawn" (01/27)

"In a gathering that included senior Pakistani and Indian military officials, the U.S. Military Chief urged all senior officers in attendance to avoid the kind of public disputes that have hurt regional relations in the past. 'I think it's really important that we work as hard as we can with each other, and that any kind of public accusations or public finger pointing, quite frankly, that does not serve any of us well,' said Admiral Mike Mullen."

News Story: U.S. Not Ready For Bioterrorist Attack: Report - "Daily Times" (01/27)

"The U.S. is not prepared for a biological terrorist attack, said a congressionally mandated panel in a report released on Tuesday. The Commission on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction Proliferation gave President Barack Obama's administration a failing grade for its efforts to prepare for and respond to a biological attack, such as the release of deadly viruses or bacteria."

News Story: Al Qaeda Still Aims To Use Weapons Of Mass Destruction - "Daily Times" (01/27)

"An American newspaper has published a report that warns that Al Qaeda has not abandoned its goal of attacking the U.S. with a chemical, biological or even nuclear weapon.... The Washington Post says that the report by a former CIA official, Rolf Mowatt-Larssen, has claimed that Al Qaeda has been far more sophisticated in its pursuit of weapons of mass destruction than is commonly believed, pursuing parallel paths to acquiring weapons and forging alliances with groups that can offer resources and expertise."

#### TERRORISM/MILITARY ISSUES

News Story: 8 Americans Injured In Attack On U.S. Base In Kabul - "Daily Times" (01/27)

"A suicide car bomber targeted a U.S. base in the Afghan capital on Tuesday, wounding 14 people, including eight Americans, said officials, hours after gunmen killed four policemen in southern Afghanistan."

News Story: New Tension Flares Between U.S., Afghan Leader - "The Nation" (01/27)

"Afghan President Hamid Karzai hit back Tuesday at stinging criticism by the U.S. Ambassador, raising new questions about ties between the two nations two days ahead of a key conference in London. The New York Times published diplomatic cables sent by President Barack Obama's envoy to Kabul, Karl Eikenberry, in which he warned Karzai was 'not an adequate strategic partner.'"

#### POLITICAL ISSUES

News Story: U.S. Committed To Lasting Ties With Afghan, Pak: Hillary - "The Nation," "The News" (01/27)

"The United States is committed to build a lasting partnership with

Afghanistan and Pakistan, U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said on Monday. 'While our military mission in Afghanistan is not open-ended, we are committed to building lasting partnerships with both Afghanistan and Pakistan,' she said at a joint media availability with Italian Foreign Minister Franco Frattini in Washington."

News Story: Zardari Asks India Not To Escalate Arms Race - "The News" (01/27)

"President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday expressed the hope that India would not escalate the arms race in the region, adding that the government would keep open the option of dialogue without lowering its guard and would welcome technology like drone predators, the President observed during a detailed interview with the Turkish Radio & Television (TRT)."

News Story: Development Key To Pakistan's Fight Against Taliban: Qureshi - "Daily Times" (01/27)

"Development programs in Pakistan's war-torn areas are an essential part of its fight against Taliban, Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi said on Tuesday. 'Holding and building violence-affected areas (is) fundamental to achieving a decisive victory against terrorism,' Qureshi told the Friends of Democratic Pakistan (FoDP) conference."

News Story: Paramilitary Troops Replace Police In Quetta - "Dawn" (01/27)

"Paramilitary FC troops were deployed in the city and 11 policemen were arrested on Tuesday as provincial government acted to restore order, following violent protests on Monday by police personnel against their low salary, a senior official said."

#### ECONOMY/ENVIRONMENT

News Story: World Bank To Provide \$6.5bn In 4 Years - "Dawn" (01/27)

"The World Bank will provide about \$6.5 billion to Pakistan over the next four years (2010-13) to fight poverty and help overcome economic boom-and-bust cycles, while briefing newsmen on the forthcoming medium-term country assistance strategy in Islamabad on Tuesday, WB Country Director Yusupha Crookes said."

News Story: Cabinet To Decide Fate Of RPPs Today - "The News" (01/27)

"The Federal Cabinet will decide the fate of the Rental Power Projects (RPPs) in the light of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) report on Wednesday. The Cabinet, which is scheduled to meet today (Wednesday) with Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani in the chair, will review the ADB report, which clearly states that if the RPPs are installed, the electricity tariff will go up by 45 per cent."

#### EDITORIALS/OPINIONS

Editorial: Inclusion of Taliban, an editorial in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (01/27)

"Despite Gen Stanley McChrystal's strong hints about the possibility of the inclusion of some Taliban leaders in a government in Kabul.... The realization now seems to be dawning that a troop surge alone will not ensure victory for the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan - the Taliban cannot be vanquished by military means alone. That would make a negotiated political arrangement crucial to ending the conflict."

Editorial: "U.S. Commander's Announcement Of Talks With The Taliban, an editorial in the center-right Urdu daily "Pakistan" (cir. 10,000) (01/27)

"General McChrystal said in an interview to Financial Times that much time has passed and now it is possible to elicit Taliban support to form a government in Afghanistan in which senior Taliban

leaders can be included.... Another development in this respect is the statement by the UN Mission, Afghanistan head in which he demanded exclusion of some Taliban from the terrorists list.... The news reports about peaceful political resolution of Afghanistan dispute through serious dialogue with the Taliban and possibility of their inclusion in the proposed government are pleasing for every peace loving individual.... Pakistan should play an active role to make the peace process fruitful in order to rid the hapless Afghan nation of the bloodshed and destruction continuing for the last 30 years."

Editorial: Gen. Stanley McChrystal's Realization, an editorial in the Lahore-based Urdu daily "Waqt" (Cir5000) (01/27)

"The senior-most U.S. Commander in Afghanistan, Gen. Stanley McChrystal, has said that there has been enough war, there should now be talks with the Taliban.... It is hoped that just as the U.S. commander is moving towards dialogue [with the Afghan Taliban], a similar stance would be adopted towards the Pakistani Taliban. This would indeed produce positive results. But for that to happen, the U.S. leaders will need to give up their double standards regarding Pakistan.... Americans would eventually need to heed Gen McChrystal's realization that war is not the solution to all problems, and positive results are only produced through talks."

Editorial: U.S. Army's Concedes Defeat In Afghanistan, an editorial in the Karachi-based, pro-Taliban Jihadi Urdu daily "Islam" (cir. 15,000) (01/27)

"Top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, General Stanley McChrystal's statement, in which he has said that the Taliban can help in running this country, is tantamount to confess the humiliating defeat. Anyhow we think that it is high time for Washington and its allies to change their thinking and policies, and undertake efforts to resolve all issues, including Afghanistan, peacefully."

Editorial: Dialogue With Taliban: A Right Decision In Right Direction, an editorial in the Peshawar-based Urdu-language daily "Mashriq" (cir. 55,000) (01/27)

"The failure of the United States and its allies to defeat the Taliban and install a pliant administration in Afghanistan is evident from the willingness of these countries to engage the Afghan resistance forces politically. No doubt, the new approach to stabilize Afghanistan by including the Taliban in mainstream politics is feasible but the resistance forces would not accept this offer unless the foreign troops withdraw from Afghanistan. The present Afghan government, which is nothing more than a U.S. puppet, can only play the role of a liaison between the two sides Taliban. We think that Washington is left with no option but to reach an agreement with the Taliban in order to stabilize Afghanistan."

Editorial: Talking Forwards, an editorial in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (01/27)

"The talks about talks that are the talk of the diplomatic and military circuits are those that are to be had - or are already being had - with the Afghan Taliban which are the concern of Mr. Karzai.... The Americans will want to have a tongue in the talking and the British have said that whilst they support the idea of talking in principle they are not happy with Pakistan as the sole interlocutor and would prefer a 'team effort'. The bottom line for the Taliban will be that they will want to talk from a position of strength rather than weakness - easier to do in Afghanistan than in Pakistan - and those who want to talk to them will be seeking a similar position.... We should not expect it to be a rapid or tidy process, nor the end result to be picture-perfect and to the satisfaction of all."

Editorial: Pakistan Dithers, an editorial in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (01/27)

"The U.S. position that Pakistan continue to expand its military operations while America alters its Afghan strategy and dialogues with the Taliban will spell disaster for Pakistan even as it leaves it isolated as happened the last time it entered a U.S.-led war as a frontline state in the region. In this connection, Zardari also

needs to realize that the London Conference has little to offer Pakistan. Even the UN seems skeptical about the outcome. There is a general feeling that the U.S. and ISAF will use the Conference to get support for their policies including giving India a larger military role in Afghanistan. Undoubtedly, now that both Gates and McChrystal have recognized the need to bring in the Taliban in any future Afghan state structure, this issue will also come up in London. What exactly will Pakistan be seeking under these circumstances? Judging from our past performances on this count, it appears that as usual we will be caught off guard."

Editorial: Summitry on Afghanistan, an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English language daily "Daily Times" (cir. 10,000) (01/27)

"The notion of a regional solution to Afghanistan's woes sounds fine in theory, and as far as its immediate neighbors and the chief architects of a political settlement allowing the U.S. and NATO forces to withdraw at some future date, i.e. the U.S. and U.K. are concerned, poses better prospects of success. The fly in the ointment is Pakistan's opposition to opening the door further to an Indian role, the rock on which the London conference and all similar initiatives beloved of the west may make shipwreck."

Editorial: An Important Summit, an editorial in the Lahore-based liberal English daily "The Post" (cir. 5,000) (01/27)

"The Istanbul summit had particular importance in the context of the forthcoming London conference on Afghanistan in countering the important role that some powers have been trying to give to India in Afghan affairs. Even otherwise more meetings between the leaders of Pakistan and Afghanistan are called for to foil the conspiracies of third parties out to sow seeds of discord between neighbors. The conference in Istanbul would prove especially helpful in evolving a joint strategy for the London conference."

Editorial: Trilateral Summit For Talks With Taliban, an editorial in the Islamabad-based rightist English daily "Pakistan Observer" (cir. 5,000) (01/27)

"The policy of heavy reliance on the use of force at the instance of the United States and other Western countries has stocked further terrorism with serious implications for Pakistan and Afghanistan. Incidentally, the United States too has come to the same conclusion that no amount of surge in troops would work until and unless the process of dialogue is initiated with what it dubs as good Taliban.... We, however, believe that there is no military solution of the conflict - be it in Afghanistan or the border region on this side of the Durand Line, and the Government (Pakistani) will have to ultimately settle the issue politically."

Editorial: Elimination Of Terrorism And Istanbul Conference Declaration, an editorial in the liberal Urdu daily "Express" (Cir. 25,000) (01/27)

"The Istanbul Declaration is proof of the fact that the policy Pakistan has adopted in the 8 years of war on terror is the right one, and only that can produce far-reaching results. Pakistan is the first country in the region that adopted a multi-pronged policy against terror and stressed that use of force is necessary against extremists and terrorists, but along with that, talks must be held with elements that renounce extremism and accept the government's writ.... The international community must provide generous funds for development projects in areas affected by extremism in Afghanistan and Pakistan, as uprooting terrorism is in the interests of the entire world."

Editorial: China Rebuffs U.S., an editorial in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (01/27)

"Although the reality of China's status as a world power is no longer debatable, the U.S. prefers deceiving itself with the thought that it still can play the role of the solitary superpower, masterminding policies of whichever country it wants. It is somehow not appreciating the full impact of China's rise as a global economic giant and growing military might and its own declining power - all that, with several other countries fast catching up in the development field, has radically altered the scenario. Yet, it considers its right to proffer counsels to others on both internal

and external matters. The Chinese, however, are no longer in a mood to accept.. They have, therefore, strongly rebuffed Washington's criticism of their attitude towards the issue of human rights and their policy on Indo-Pakistan relations and Kashmir. China has asserted that it needs no counseling and knows full well how to take care of its interests."

Editorial: China's Warning To The U.S. And The Prerequisites Of Our Security, an editorial in the second-largest, nationalist Urdu daily "Nawa-i-Waqt" (cir. 150,000) (01/27)

"China has warned America against interference in its internal matters and lecturing it on India, Pakistan and Kashmir.... China fully understands that America wants to establish its hegemony via India in order to achieve its objectives in the region. That was why China reiterated its principle stand on Kashmir and categorically warned America to abstain from its aggressive designs.... Our rulers too should openly support China and tell America that regional peace and Pak-India friendship cannot be achieved until the Kashmir dispute is resolved in keeping with the UN resolutions."

Editorial: China's Stance On Kashmir And The Offer Of Mediation, an editorial note in the liberal Urdu daily "Express" (cir. 25,000) (01/27)

"China has warned America against interfering in its internal matters and lecturing it on issues related to Kashmir, Pakistan and India.... The question is: are India and the U.S. colluding to test China's nerves? If this is true, then China has done well to give a tit-for-tat response. The Chinese spokesman is right in saying that the U.S. should not talk about the Kashmir issue if it cannot play a role in helping resolve it.... Sooner or later, India will have to choose one of two options on Kashmir: dialogue with Pakistan or implementation of UN resolutions on the issue. And it is very heartening that Pakistan has China's vote on [Kashmir]."

Editorial: Pakistan Losing EU Market, an editorial in the Islamabad-based rightist English daily "Pakistan Observer" (cir. 5,000) (01/27)

"At a time when Pakistan was seeking greater access to U.S. and European Union markets, a report published in this newspaper has warned that the country could even lose whatever access it already has to EU market once the 27-member economic blocs inks deal with India on the under-discussion Free Trade Agreement (FTA), which is likely to be finalized next year.... This was evident from the fact that the EU had first-ever summit meeting with Pakistan in June last year but the initiative could not produce desired results."

Opinion: An Unwinnable War, an op-ed by Rizwan Asghar in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (01/27)

"President Obama will not be able to win the war in Afghanistan but he could save his country from a disgraceful defeat. However, so far President Obama has based his strategy on the dictates of a warlike strategy.... Obama is trying to win a losing war and which no invader from Alexander the Great to Soviet Russia could win. The forces of history are bound to succeed this time again. The war in Afghanistan is not only unwinnable but its prolongation is detrimental to U.S. national security. For American troops it is time to move away from their infatuation with war and go back before they bring the U.S. down to dust. Perhaps it will not be wrong to say at this time that history is not on Obama's side. After eight years of bloodshed and strife, Afghanistan remains an incubator for terrorists and a haven for Al Qaeda recruits."

Opinion: Secretary Robert Gates Visit To Islamabad, an op-ed by Air Marshal Ayaz A. Khan (R) in the Islamabad-based rightist English daily "Pakistan Observer" (cir. 5,000) (01/27)

"As a long time CIA top official in the past, and U.S. Secretary of Defense under George Bush and now under Barack Obama, Gates should have shown restraint in his pro-India utterances. No one in Obama Administration has been mired in Pakistan for as long as Defense Secretary Robert Gates, yet is insensitive of Pakistani feelings. He regretted the trust deficit between Washington and Islamabad, and

tried to soothe the country gnawing rancor towards the United States. Some U.S. officials take Pakistan for granted as a boot boy, which could be ordered around to do their bidding. And the questions hurled at Mr. Gates by journalists and military officials reflected the Pakistani resentment. New York Times reports that during a closed door session with the students and faculty at the National Defense University at Islamabad, a military officer asked, Are you with us or against us? Mr. Gates could hardly miss that the Pakistani officer was mimicking former President George Bush. Stunned Secretary Gates replied, off course we are with you. That indeed was the essence and the message Mr. Gates wanted Pakistani to accept."

Opinion: Snatch And Grab Pak Nukes, an op-ed by S.M. Hali in the populist, often sensational national English daily "The News" (cir. 55,000) (01/27)

"U.S. Defence Secretary Robert Gates, during his recent visit to Islamabad has assured Pakistan: 'The United States has no desire to control Pakistan's nuclear weapons or covet a single inch of its soil or seek military bases in Pakistan.'... Perhaps, the U.S. State Department needs to rein in its own media to avoid indulging in an organized campaign of 'propaganda' misrepresenting the U.S. intentions in the region lest they cause a misadventure. Pakistan is not Iraq or Afghanistan. Its military is battle hardened and its Nuclear Command Authority fully capable of exercising the nuclear option at the exact moment and the precise targets. Our South Asian neighbors should join forces to thwart any external aggression. If India is also involved in this conspiracy, it should be mindful that if the Pakistani nukes are targeted today, the Indian nukes can meet the same fate tomorrow."

Opinion: The Time To Talk To The Taliban Is Now, an op-ed by Ahmed Rashid in the Peshawar-based independent regional daily "The Statesman" (cir. 3,000) (01/27)

"The vast majority of Afghans do not want the return of a Taliban regime despite their anger at the Karzai government and the general international failure to deliver economic progress. Many Afghans believe that as long as western troops remain, there is still the hope that security can return and their lives change for the better.... There is an urgent need for a publicly promoted strategy involving concrete efforts to build political institutions and provide humanitarian aid in ways that do not require intrusive western control - a strategy that could attract many members of the Taliban, reduce violence, and placate Afghans who are opposed to such compromises. Obama officials have talked up the need for such a strategy but accomplished little during his first year. Yet such goals are of paramount importance."

Opinion: Drones And The Law, an op-ed by Rafia Zakaria in the Karachi-based center-left independent national English daily "Dawn" (cir. 55,000) (01/27)

"While there has been much anger and public outcry against the drone attacks in Pakistan, there have been few attempts to present objections to international forums where the violations of international instruments can be noted. Commentators in the Pakistani media have focused exclusively on the utility of these attacks in killing foreign fighters rather than their legality. The problem with the former approach is that it evaluates the attacks from the angle of political and tactical considerations at the expense of the legal. Given the increasing frequency of drone attacks in Pakistan, as well as the likelihood of the expansion of the program, it is imperative that human rights and civil society groups in Pakistan unite in protesting the illegality of the attacks and attempt to garner the support of the international community against them."

News Analysis: Troika On Rampage, by Sikander Shaheen in the center-right national English daily "The Nation" (cir. 20,000) (01/27)

"U.S. covert organisation Central Intelligence Agency's (CIA) notorious reputation to eliminate its 'enemies' is known well to the world and its intensive efforts, which have been underway since long, to form a vicious alliance with Israel and India have finally begun to show.... Apart from that, as reported by U.S. Homeland Security Newswire and local Indian media, Israel and India, in



December last year, had a series of meetings of joint defence working group focusing counterterrorism and intelligence sharing, delivery of weapons and enhancement of cooperation in research and development.... Given that the U.S. barely sees any signs of success in its so-called war on terror in Afghanistan, U.S. and Israel are encouraging Indian military and economic presence in Afghanistan to serve the purpose. While Pakistan is asked to 'do more' the U.S. and India, with the help of pro-American Afghan government, are all set to engage 'likeminded' and moderate Taliban into talks, to use them for destabilizing Pakistan and Iran. Under the scenario, the situation seems fit into what is described by some analysts as FINISH plan, abbreviated from 'financial ruin, infrastructure destruction, nuclear scientists elimination, Indian hegemony, seizing of physical nuclear weapons and harassing Pakistan's leadership and its public.'"

(All circulation figures are based on estimation)  
Patterson